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ABSTRACT

Two contrasting educational responses to cultural diversity are discussed. One is a core curriculum education movement and the other is a multicultural education movement. It is argued that neither of these responses will have an appreciable effect on the school-learning problems of minorities who have not traditionally done well in school. Neither is based on a good understanding of the nature of the cultural diversity or cultural differences of minority groups. To understand what it is about minority groups, their cultures, and languages that makes crossing boundaries difficult, it is necessary to understand that there are different types of minority groups. Comparative study has resulted in the classification of minority groups as autonomous (minorities primarily in a numerical sense, such as Jews or the Amish), immigrant or voluntary, and caste-like or involuntary minorities. Primary cultural differences, differences that existed before the minority and majority came in contact, distinguish voluntary minorities, but secondary cultural differences, arising after two groups came in contact, distinguish the involuntary minorities. Understanding the situation of involuntary minority children is imperative in designing education that will meet their needs. (Contains 87 references.) (SLD)

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